

**BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
AUGUST 14, 2012**

The regular meeting of the Board of Library Trustees was held on Tuesday evening, August 14, 2012, convening at 7PM with the following present: Elaine Melisi, Jean Conditto, Tina Torello, Susan Durand and Michael Ganshirt. Director Jessi Finnie was also present. Janice Guillemette was away on vacation.

Payroll warrants were signed.

Bills were authorized for payment

Library Gift Fund	\$29.86
Fines and Fees	\$919.79
Expense	\$30,017.60

The minutes of the June meeting were accepted; there was no meeting in July because of lack of quorum.

First on the agenda was a letter from a patron who had a bad experience at the library, related to the issue of a patron suspension to be dealt with later in executive session. Her letter related to inappropriate images viewed by her 8-year old son as he passed by another patron's computer. He was asking that the library consider installing filters on the computers to prevent this kind of issue. There was considerable discussion about the use of filters, restriction of freedom of information, and the difficulty of maintaining control of the filtering situations. Trustees supported the recommendation of the director that we review and revise the computer use policy to tighten controls on inappropriate use of the computers. The feeling was that tighter policies would be preferable to using filters. The director will draft some possible changes to the policy and will look at some other libraries' policies as well; she will bring a revision to the trustees for the next meeting for discussion and vote on revisions. It was suggested that Jessi drop a note to the patron to let her know that the director and trustees are working on changes to the policies.

Because of the crowded agenda this evening, Jessi said that in September she would like to discuss the final draft of the Long-Range Plan (which is due on October 7<sup>th</sup>)

Next item on the agenda was a request to consider revision to the library's position on individual fundraising efforts through the library. This issue was raised by a member of the Friends of the Library who wanted to conduct a personal fundraiser for an individual whose son was facing surgery for a brain tumor. The trustees voted unanimously, and the director concurred, that the policy would not be changed. A number of the ramifications of this issue were revisited in the course of the discussion, and there was no interest in changing the policy.

It was noted as well that the Friends, a group organized to support the library, has as its objective fundraising for the benefit of the library only. The Friends will be notified of the discussion and vote on this matter.

Jessi was given permission to move ahead with the purchase of the book drop previously discussed and approved. The Building Inspector has given her some advice about timing of the delivery and installation of the drop, since the library will be painted in a few weeks, the parking lot sealed, and the DPW will need to be asked to assist with the installation. This will all need to be coordinated with the outside work and convenience of entry for patrons while the work is being done. Jessi will review the quotes and original choice of vendor, in hope of a sale price



being available. The possibility of selling the old drop for scrap value was also raised; she will look into this as well.

In addition to the painting and sealing of the parking area, the interior carpet cleaning has been done, and a new front entry mat has been put down (this came from the police station). Another item was brought up- the handicapped parking space has been placed on the street at the entrance to the library driveway. It has been noted that the DPW will need to fix the broken curbing where a passenger gets out of the car, because is dangerous for anyone walking to the library or getting out of a car there.

The Adult Services Librarian/Assistant Director position has not yet been advertised because of union issues involved with the title change. Trustees approved the director's recommendation to employ Sam Soucy as a consultant for approximately 10 hours a week to complete work on the Long-Range Planning project and other tasks needing to be completed since her departure. This will involve approximately \$1500 for 8 weeks of work. Frank Lynam had recommended using the salary line to cover this work, but since it has become a union issue, Jessi will pay the amount out of the Fines and Fees Account.

Jessi brought up a request from MLS that all libraries in the system make a pledge of between \$500 and \$2000 to fund a Newspaper Collaborative Statewide Purchase of newspaper databases. Trustees felt that this is an expensive commitment and they would need a lot more information before considering participation, Jessi will bring any further information to the trustees; she said that it likely won't go anyplace, based on financial concerns by many people.

The agenda item on Technology needs will be moved to the September meeting.

Jessi noted some upcoming dates of importance: first Saturday we will be open after the summer is August 24, 2012 (school starts for the district on August 29<sup>th</sup>) OCLN Executive Board meeting on 8/16/12 from 10AM-noon. ARIS forms are due to the state offices on 8/24/12-Elaine will stop by on August 21<sup>st</sup> to sign the forms. Trustees will be given copies of the forms, since some have not had an opportunity to review them in detail and see the kind of information that needs to be provided. There is a Union/Town bargaining session set for August 30<sup>th</sup> from 10AM to noon.

At 7:35PM an executive session was requested to discuss a patron suspension issue and a union issue. The vote was unanimous, and the board went into executive session at 7:37PM. The trustees returned to the regular meeting after ending the executive session at 7:59PM.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10PM.





Mr. and Mrs. Sullivan  
P.O. Box 452  
Whitman, MA 02382

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Ed and Dee Sullivan,

I just wanted to follow-up with you regarding the letter you sent on 8/7/12 that discussed your concerns about the library's computers and computer policy.

I passed your letter along to all of the Trustees, and we discussed it at the 8/14/12 Trustees Meeting.

The Trustees and I both agree that the computer policy does need to be revised, especially in regards to the consequences of violating that policy, and we'll be making this a priority.

However, we are also in agreement that library filters are not the solution to this problem. Adding filters to the library's computers brings up many issues, including cost and staff time. Filters are expensive to purchase and maintain. The town's Director of Technology told me that I would need to expect someone to spend almost all of their time managing the filter, since it requires constant updating.

There are also complications with filters and the information that they suppress. For instance, someone researching "breast cancer" may run into problems with their search terms. Likewise, I may have a teen patron who needs to research a very personal topic, such as "child sexual abuse", and this patron will likely not feel comfortable coming to the desk and asking us to do the search for them.

These are just two examples, but really filters often filter out many harmless sites. Because filters are largely text-based, sometimes sites with offensive language are screened out but sites with offensive imagery are still able to get through.

The Trustees and I both agree that the best approach at this time is to have a policy in place that will help prevent this from happening, and also gives us an avenue to handle problem patrons who do exhibit this behavior.

You are welcome to attend any Trustees meeting, held every second Tuesday at 7 p.m. in the library's Historical Room, to discuss this issue further.

Thank you,

Jessi Finnie, Library Director

CC: Elaine Melisi, Chair, Board of Trustees

